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Developing teachers as leaders

EIS in partnership with Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities

By Professor Christine Forde (Glasgow), Deirdre Torrance (Edinburgh) and Mike Carroll (Glasgow)



UPCOMING CPD EVENTS

The EIS is continuing to hold joint CPD events with local authorities through the SULF 7 Project which ends on 31 March.

CPD Events took place in Edinburgh on 11 March, North Lanarkshire on 15 March and Midlothian on 18 March. There will be reports from these events in the next edition of the SEJ.

Upcoming events are being held on Saturday 26 March in the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre. This event is open to all teachers in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. If you wish to attend please contact Sheila Morrison, EIS Learning Representative: smorrison@eis-learnrep.org.uk

A joint event with Renfrewshire Council is being held on Tuesday 22 March. The title of the event

is "Curriculum for Excellence: Taking Risk with Pedagogy, Education and Leadership" from 7 pm to 9 pm in the Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew. The keynote speaker is Ollie Bray, National Adviser for Learning and Technology Future, LTS. If you wish to attend contact David Thomson, EIS Learning Representative: dthomson@eis-learnrep.org.uk

A panel event is being held in Clackmannanshire on Wednesday 30 March in

Lornhill Academy, Alloa from 4 pm to 6 pm. The event will be chaired by Tom Hamilton, Director of Educational Policy, GTC(S). If you wish to attend please contact Karen Farrell, EIS Learning Representative: kfarrell@eis-learnrep.org.uk



The first cohort of participants has now completed the second of the three courses in the **PG Certificate in Developing Leadership and Learning**. This innovative programme for teacher leadership has been developed by the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh in partnership with the EIS to provide a programme of development specifically for teachers who want to develop their leadership role. There are two groups, one at the University of Glasgow and one at the University of Edinburgh. For us working as tutors with these cohorts of teachers one of the most notable and rewarding aspects is the enthusiasm of course members for taking on a leadership role, seeing this as a personal challenge in their professional development:

“Exciting to be part of such important developments in education. Has certainly got me asking ‘What if...?’ in a very positive way.”

“I have really enjoyed this course and it has been the most useful CPD opportunity I have had. I have found it has opened doors for me and am starting to find it really liberating delving into all the self evaluation.”

James Spillane, one of the key writers on distributed leadership talks of leadership being ‘stretched over schools’ where leadership is exercised by different people in school, those in management but also those teachers who are involved in working collaboratively to contribute to the school’s development. The EIS (2010) policy on leadership underlines the important contribution all teachers can make as leaders. However, the possibilities of teacher leadership are not yet fully appreciated. Within a distributed perspective on leadership, the focus of teachers remains the quality of educational experience of pupils. The difference, relates to the widening of the lens for that focus, from the context of the classroom to the wider school context. Pupil learning and achievement has to be the central concern of all in school and teacher leadership is a powerful means of enriching teaching and learning. Teacher leadership can make a vital contribution to the development of the school particularly in the context of the Curriculum for Excellence, where the development and enhancement of teacher expertise in pedagogy and learning is the bedrock on which this programme is founded. Working collegiately is the means by which this expertise can be shared, enhanced and sustained.

In the PG Certificate in Developing Leadership and Learning, the crucial link between leadership and learning is made. The programme is designed to enable teachers to develop their skills and understanding to act confidently and purposefully as a teacher leader to support the development of learning in the school.

The Programme

The PG Certificate in Developing Leadership and Learning has three courses:

- Course 1: Developing as a leader
- Course 2: Working collaboratively
- Course 3: Leading a project

The structure of the programme is designed to enable participants to progressively develop their skills and understanding about their role as a teacher leader and then take this forward within the context of their school.

Learning in this programme is based around real experiences, set within the context of the school. An important outcome is the development of strategies and tools to enhance practice and contribute to the quality of pupil experience. The evaluations of the programme indicate that this indeed is a key strength of the programme.

A new cohort will start in the coming session and for Course 1, participants can choose between a summer school in early August at the University of Edinburgh or a Saturday programme at the University of Glasgow.

So why should you think about becoming involved? Here are some reasons given by those currently on the programme:

- It’s about experienced, competent teachers becoming actively involved in their school’s improvement plan.
- Teacher leaders don’t wait for things to happen to them. They are actively involved in the improvements happening in their school.
- Teacher leadership is when one teacher or a group of teachers influence other teachers ... to work collaboratively towards a shared vision.
- I have 15 years teaching experience across all stages of the primary school. Recently I have had the opportunity to take on a few small leadership tasks and now I would like to scaffold any further leadership tasks with a deeper understanding of the theory of leadership.

We will leave the last word with one of the participants:

“Never thought I’d enjoy a work orientated Saturday morning so much. Great to meet like-minded and friendly colleagues.”

If you would like further details of the PG Certificate in Developing Leadership and Learning, please contact:

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